

Strategies for Success

School District Energy Conservation Activities

7. Groundskeeping

- ☐ Create natural landscapes, with native trees and shrubs. Trees and shrubs provide shade from harmful UV rays; natural filtration of air and noise pollution; and niches that offer food and shelter to wildlife. They also require less water, chemicals and maintenance and subsequently reduce long-term upkeep costs. Ask a local nursery if they will work with you to provide native plants on school grounds.
- ☐ Use a minimal amount of fertilizers on school grounds or try finding natural alternatives to fertilizing. Fertilizers can migrate into water bodies and harm aquatic ecosystems.
- ☐ Use sand on icy walks instead of salt which pollutes water and can harm plants. Do not pour hazardous materials, such as science class chemicals down the drain because they can eventually be released into drinking water sources.
- ☐ Dispose of all litter in recycle bins or trash cans so that the litter does not get washed into nearby storm sewers.
- ☐ Encourage employees or contractors to use integrated pest management.
- ☐ Only spray pesticides when children are out of school.
- ☐ Follow pesticide label instructions and wear protective equipment such as gloves and a face mask. The person applying pesticides should be a registered technician or certified applicator.
- ☐ Do not purchase excess pesticides.
- ☐ Store pesticides in a secure place.
- ☐ Do not (1) mix pesticides with everyday trash, (2) wash them down sewers or drains, or (3) dump them on the ground.
- ☐ Practice water-efficient landscaping. If school grounds must be watered, do so in the morning or evening so water will soak into root systems and not be lost to evaporation. Also, school grounds should not be watered more than every third day and not on windy days.
- ☐ Use drip and other high efficiency irrigation systems in lieu of sprinklers.
- ☐ Water plants at the roots, not the leaves or trunk.
- ☐ Use mulch around landscape plants to reduce evaporation and weed growth.
- ☐ Use dry cleanup before using water/spray washing. Minimize water washing.
- ☐ When mowing lawns and playing fields, set the mower blades to 2-3 inches high to help shade the soil and improve moisture retention.
- ☐ Do not keep vending machines outside. If necessary, place them on the north side of buildings or provide them with total shielding from the sun year-round.

We're here to get you started, and see you through!

Rebuild Colorado

A Program of the Governor's Office of Energy Management and Conservation
225 East 16th Avenue, Suite 650 Denver, CO 80203
303-866-2264 or 1-800-632-6662
Email: rebuildco@state.co.us
Web: www.colorado.gov/rebuildco

